

## NET ZERO 2030 - 2021/22 ACTION REPORT

Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services

**Status:** For Information

**Key Decision:** No

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** The Council's commitment to Net Zero 2030.

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Margot McArthur

**Contact Officer(s):** Helen French, Ext. 7357; Margaret Carr, Ext. 7341

**Recommendation to Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee:**

To note the 2021/2022 Net Zero Action Report for information.

### Introduction and Background

- 1 Climate change is an extensive issue, and achieving Net Zero carbon emissions is a top priority that encompasses all aspects of the Council. It incorporates energy efficiency and generation, sustainable transport and active travel, air quality, health and wellbeing, habitats and biodiversity, flooding, water supply and consumption, and more.
- 2 We have made a commitment to work towards achieving net zero carbon emissions for the Council and its assets by 2030 (Council emissions). We also have an ambition to assist the District to become net zero by working closely with local communities (District emissions) and to improve the resilience of the District to a changing climate (Climate resilience). This is collectively known as our Net Zero 2030 commitment.

## Net Zero 2030 Actions - 2021/22

- 3 The Net Zero 2030 Actions for the year 2021-22 were agreed by Cabinet in February 2021. The actions were organised into 8 categories:



- 4 The accompanying report in Appendix A sets out the progress to achieve each of the actions up to March 2022. This committee report provides additional detail on a selection of the projects achieved in 2021-22 for information.
- 5 Many of the projects remain ongoing and have been incorporated into the actions for 22/23 and were agreed by members in April 2022.

### Net Zero webpage and Communications

- 6 We continue to proactively and positively engage with our communities providing advice, sharing best practice, through education and training, and by encouraging communities to take individual responsibility for their own carbon emissions. We have updated the Net Zero webpages on the Council's website [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero) and a single webpage has now been expanded to several pages.
- 7 The webpages include details of the net zero commitment and progress, sustainable movement, home energy efficiency and ways that residents, businesses and schools can get involved to reduce their own carbon emissions.

- 8 We have continued to engage with communities through social media and have included posts ranging from encouraging recycling, tips on how to lower your carbon footprint, reducing food waste, making businesses more sustainable, energy efficiency as well as promoting SDC initiatives and progress.

### The Movement Strategy

- 9 The Movement Strategy has been developed to set out the Council's priorities for sustainable movement in Sevenoaks District. It includes a number of aims to support the priorities including improving the cycling infrastructure, strengthening public transport connections, embracing new technologies and promoting active travel.
- 10 The strategy will help us engage better with partners and infrastructure providers and has already helped to secure funding for the first Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) covering Sevenoaks Urban Area due to be completed in Autumn 2022.

### Greener Homes

- 11 In Spring 2021 the Council successfully secured almost £1.5 million from the Green Homes Grant to insulate hard to heat mobile homes within the District. It was estimated that when both phases of the project are complete, over the 25-year life cycle of a mobile home, 2,914 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> will have been saved.
- 12 The Council's Housing Team were awarded Highly Commended at the Energy Efficiency awards for insulating 48 park homes owned by people on low incomes using the Green Homes Grant funding. This is estimated to have saved the combined owners £200,000 on their heating bills and over 1,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over the lifetime of the property.
- 13 We have also been successful in our application to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Home Upgrade Grant, receiving £402,500 for the next 12 months to help tackle fuel poverty for low income families by providing energy efficiency upgrades, insulation and low-carbon heating to low-income households in the Sevenoaks District. An Energy Efficiency Projects Officer has been appointed to oversee this project and work with communities to improve energy efficiency.

### Smart bins

- 14 In Autumn 2021 six new high-tech compactor bins were installed across the District. The solar powered litterbins hold 240 litres of rubbish and have an on-board compactor that reduces litter volumes by up to 10 times. The bins also have a sensor that informs the Council when they are full so the refuse crews make no wasted journeys.
- 15 The Council also secured a £25,000 grant to install fifty 'smart-bins' in rural areas across the District as part of our overall litter strategy. These bins also tell the Council when they're full, reducing mileage and carbon emissions from wasted journeys.

### Low Emission and Electric Vehicles

- 16 The Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy was agreed by members in July 2021. The strategy sets out how we will support low emission and electric vehicles within the Council's fleet and across the District.
- 17 We are working in partnership with Kent County Council to install new charging points in rural locations, council owned car parks and for taxi use.
- 18 The Direct Services Team have been investigating how the fleet can effectively transition away from traditional combustion vehicles. This has including purchasing electric vehicles, exploring the possibility of biodiesels and hydrogen vehicles, and undertaking a round review to improve efficiency.

### Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

- 19 As set out in the midyear report in autumn 2021, the Council worked in partnership with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership to develop eco-trails at Council owned locations across the District to engage families to enjoy and value local nature sites during summer 2021. These trails will be in place again for summer 2022.
- 20 We have worked in partnership with the NWKCP to deliver habitat and biodiversity improvement projects across the District including installing natural flood management measures, "hedgehog highways", habitat enhancements and community engagement. They have also produced a number of "wildlife at home" films to encourage the community to make space for wildlife in their own gardens. These are available on the Council's YouTube page [Sevenoaks District Council - YouTube](#).

## Air Quality Action Plan

- 21 Officers have been working closely together to finalise the Air Quality Action Plan as the main causes of poor air quality in the district currently remains petrol and diesel combustion engines and transport is the second largest emitter of carbon. By reducing vehicle emissions, we will improve air quality and also reduce carbon emissions from transport.
- 22 The Air Quality Action Plan outlines the actions we will take to improve air quality in Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) between 2022 and 2027 and was agreed in April 2022. The measures include:
- Encouraging sustainable and active travel such as cycling and walking
  - Improving the electric vehicle charging network and encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles
  - Promoting behavioural change to encourage more efficient travel
  - Encouraging the use of public transport as an alternative to private vehicles
  - Working with schools and community groups to inform children about air and air pollution, encouraging more walking and cycling to school.

## **Next Steps**

- 23 Officers will continue to make progress to achieve the Net Zero 2030 actions. We will also continue to identify new opportunities and projects to deliver the Net Zero 2030 commitment.
- 24 Regular update reports on the Net Zero 2030 work will be provided for members via the Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee.

## **Other options Considered and/or rejected**

The Council have made a commitment to Net Zero 2030.

## **Key Implications**

### Financial

Funding for the Net Zero 2030 commitment is currently being met from existing budgets.

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

No legal implications have been identified.

## Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## Net Zero Implications

Members are reminded of the Council's stated ambition to be Net Zero with regards to carbon emissions by 2030. This report sets out the progress made to achieve this aim.

## **Conclusions**

The Council have committed to Net Zero 2030 and have identified actions to help achieve this goal. We are currently making good progress to achieve the actions within the agreed timescales.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Net Zero Actions 2021/22 Action Report

Appendix B - Net Zero Actions 2021/22 Highlight Report

### **Background Papers**

None

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**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services**